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Connecticut. State
Board of Health

Restriction and prevention
of diphtheria ... 1878.

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RESTRICTION AND PREVENTION
OF
DIPHTHERIA.
ISSUED BY THE
CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

Please read carefully, and Preserve for
future reference.

HARTFORD:
THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD CO., PRINTERS.
1878.

GENERAL RULES AGAINST INFECTION.

PURE AIR, Pure Water, Proper Food, and Clothing, are essential conditions of health. *Cleanliness, dryness, and ventilation*, in and around dwellings and places of public resort, are the surest safeguards.

No house refuse, filth, excremental matter, or foul dirt should be allowed to remain about inhabited dwellings.

Filthy, foul, and *damp* places, saturated with sink or slop water, and shaded by vegetation or otherwise, near dwellings or places of public resort, should be purified, cleansed, and dried, and as free access of air and sunlight provided, as possible. They foster, nourish, and render more fatal, if they do not produce pestilential diseases.

Disinfection should be thoroughly and persistently used at the appearance of a contagious disease. Disinfectants destroy contagion that would otherwise spread and multiply.

All sewer connections should be trapped and *ventilated*.

Nurses and attendants should spend some time each day in *pure air*, and take out-of-door exercise whenever possible, but at such times as to avoid contact with others.

DIPHThERIA

IS an infectious and contagious disease, though not as contagious as scarlet fever or small pox, still requiring great precaution. Children are more liable than adults, and may convey it to one another, or it may be conveyed to them by adults.

The infection clings to articles in the room where cases have occurred, causing a reappearance of the disease, and after a single case it often breaks out in many places, always within a restricted area, sometimes gathering strength in its passage. Hence the importance of thorough disinfection. Unsani- tary conditions favor its spread and increase its malignancy.

It is contagious by the exhalations from the sick, contaminating the air of the sick room *in proportion to the severity of the case*, and the extent of the membrane in the throat; by direct contact with infected articles, *e. g.* by the use of eating or drinking utensils, towels, handkerchiefs, etc., used about

the sick. It is conveyed by the diphtheritic membrane coming into contact with any mucous surface (*e. g.* mouth or nose), through kissing, sneezing, or coughing. The poison usually enters the system through the throat and upper air passages.

RULES FOR PREVENTION.

First. ISOLATE THE SICK in a well ventilated room, preferably the uppermost room in the house. Place the bed so as to be accessible on all sides. Allow no person to enter except the necessary attendants. *In malignant cases* allow no one to go from the house to school, or to any public assembly.

Second. In preparing the sick room remove all unnecessary articles of furniture. Carpets, curtains, and table covers, are especially liable to retain infection. After use the room should be cleansed and ventilated, and in malignant cases, disinfected thoroughly.

Third. All bed and body clothing, towels and handkerchiefs used by the sick, as soon as removed, should be placed in vessels containing disinfecting fluids and never be washed with other household articles. All plates, cups, glasses, spoons and the like, used by the sick, should be rinsed with some disinfectant and washed separately.

Fourth. Nurses and attendants should wear only washable garments, and use disinfected water for hands, unsparingly. Physicians and clergymen should be provided with disinfected water for their hands on leaving the sick room.

Fifth. All scraps of linen used in receiving discharges from the mouth or nose should be immediately burned. All receptacles for filth should be thoroughly disinfected.

Sixth. CHILDREN should not be allowed to attend the funerals of those dying from diphtheria. Disinfectants should be used freely in the room and about the body while it remains unburied. The coffin should never be opened at funerals to expose the dead to the public.

DISINFECTANTS.

The following disinfectants are recommended by the Board :

FOR DISINFECTING PRIVIES, ASH-PITS, CESSPOOLS, DRAINS,
AND OTHER OFFENSIVE PLACES :

Fifty pounds of copperas, (sulphate of iron, green vitriol) to a barrel of water.

This may be dissolved in a smaller quantity of hot water, and then diluted. It may be used freely and repeated as often as odors arise. It is cheap and efficient. About four gallons are required to disinfect an ordinary vault used by one family. A smaller quantity may then be poured in occasionally.

FOR SINK PIPES AND WATER CLOSETS :

One pound of nitrate of lead to a gallon of water. Use freely.

FOR ARTICLES OF CLOTHING, ETC., USED ABOUT THE
PATIENT.

Sulphate of zinc, eight ounces, crude carbolic acid, one ounce, warm water, four gallons.

Throw all articles of body linen, sheets, etc., at once into this solution and boil in clear water. In malignant cases such articles should be boiled in this solution, diluted with an equal quantity of water, previous to boiling in soap and water. It can be used freely in the sick room. It does not stain. A towel may be wet with it and hung in the room. A sheet may be hung across the entrance hall or door and kept constantly wet with it. Nurses and attendants will find it well to occasionally wash their hands in this fluid.

Bromo chloralum, diluted with eight to ten parts of water, can be used in the sick-room for wetting towels and sheets, as above described, and for washing the hands, when the odor of carbolic acid is offensive, as it is odorless.

The foregoing is published by the State Board of Health with a view to lessening the number of cases and deaths from diphtheria which has formed a rapidly increasing cause of death of late, causing, as reported, 589 deaths in 1877.

The experience of the New York Board of Health and the reports of the Massachusetts and Wisconsin State Boards have been freely used as their experience is invaluable.

Any communications upon the subject, with relation to localities, may be addressed to

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH,
HARTFORD, CONN.



